

CENTRAL AMERICAN POLICY

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BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE
NINETY-EIGHTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION
ON
PROGRESS ON CERTIFICATION IN EL SALVADOR

AUGUST 4, 1983

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Secretary SHULTZ. Certainly, sir. But I do not want to get us in a position where we wind up with a prohibition against any training in the region from the authorizing committee and then no money to do it from the appropriating committee, and the result of it is we have our hands tied behind our backs. That is one of the problems.

Senator BIDEN. I understand, but I think that would put the minds of the American people at some ease.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. Mr. Chairman, I have been counting heads around here and see that there are seven of us and that the Secretary has to leave in 45 minutes—

The CHAIRMAN. He has to leave in an hour and a quarter.

Secretary SHULTZ. I will stay as long as you want, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator HELMS.

Senator HELMS. Mr. Secretary, listening to the line of questioning by Senator Biden, particularly early on, it occurred to me that his questions imply certainly that the American people appear to misunderstand that the Soviet Union is something abstract in all of this in Central America. I think it needs to be emphasized over and over again that the Nicaraguans are not just a group of people, the Sandinistas, operating independently of anybody.

I think the story about Cuba and the Soviet Union needs better to be understood. That is the reason I have been insisting with three Secretaries of State that the American people be told something about the Kennedy-Khrushchev accords. I have asked and asked and you have agreed to come up at some time in September. I look forward to that, and I thank you.

Secretary SHULTZ. I do not know that I said September, but anyway I agreed to come up and I will try to do so as promptly as possible and appear before the full committee.

Senator HELMS. I have a copy of a newspaper story from the Miami Herald saying that you have agreed to a limited review. Now, I never suggested a limited review and I hope that is not the assumption of the State Department.

Secretary SHULTZ. Well, Senator, the conversation we had on this subject was right here in this room, and whatever any newspaper wants to say they can say. But you asked me if I would testify and I said that I would, and I will.

And at the same time, I would say to you, I have been studying these accords, of course, and looking into them. There are several files full of papers of one kind or another. It is a very complex subject, and I would want to be as well prepared as I can before any such testimony. And I think it also should be in a closed hearing.

Senator HELMS. I appreciate that, and of course I can understand it.

May I ask you if you would be willing to have the appropriate State Department officer work with the staff of this committee in that connection?

I have been told there are five file drawers on one occasion, and then another Secretary of State told me there are five file cabinets full of information. Now, however, many drawers or cabinets there are, I would not want there to be a limitation, because I believe the American people at long last deserve to know what was in the Ken-

nedy-Khrushchev accord, because I think it has a direct bearing on what is going on in Central America today, and I have thought that all along and I look forward to your visit.

Secretary SHULTZ. I think there are a lot of things to be careful about, including precedents about, leaving aside the Kennedy-Khrushchev accords as such, the release of diplomatic exchanges as a general proposition, and we have to provide some safeguards on that. So that I think is important.

Of course, there have been publicly released the basic documents that go back to the original 1962 incidents, but there have been lots of developments since. It has been a kind of rolling, developing situation.

Senator HELMS. But in any case, I think the American people have the right to know whether we agreed, by implication or otherwise, for the Soviet Union to do what they are doing in our hemisphere. And I think the sooner that is cleared up the better off everybody is going to be, and perhaps it will help you in explaining to the American people what it is all about down there.

In any case, there have been many fears expressed that an undertaking might be in process regarding El Salvador and Nicaragua. For example, this report is circulating in fairly reliable circles in this city: If the Communists will just pull back in El Salvador, we will withdraw our support for the freedom fighters in Nicaragua.

Now, I understand that it depends on who has made the proposition. But first of all I want to ask you if you know anything about any plan of this Government to do that.

Secretary SHULTZ. I do not know what you consider to be in this Government. But if you consider the House of Representatives to be in this Government, they had a vote on that subject the other day.

Senator HELMS. I am talking about the administration.

Secretary SHULTZ. The administration took a position on the Boland-Zablocki amendment that was very clear. There were also negotiations, as you know, about so-called symmetry arrangements, but none that the administration agreed to conform to precisely what you just said.

Senator HELMS. I have been told by sources that I have found to be reliable in the past that the former President of Costa Rica, Daniel Oduber, has been in Havana the past couple of weeks to discuss precisely such a proposal with Castro, including a scenario which would have some sort of cosmetic elections in Nicaragua.

Do you have any knowledge that Oduber was there doing that?

Secretary SHULTZ. I do not. Maybe there is some intelligence I just do not happen to be familiar with right now.

Senator HELMS. Well, let me tighten the situation up a little bit. I have further been informed that Dr. Kissinger met with Oduber recently to discuss this initiative, shortly before Dr. Kissinger was selected for the post. Is that true, or do you know?

Secretary SHULTZ. Not that I know of.

I might say that Dr. Kissinger has made a point of the fact that in the conduct of his activities as Chairman of the Commission his task is and his intent is to give us a look at recommendations for the future and where we should be pointing, and not to get himself involved in the day-to-day operation of our policy and implementation of it.

I think that that is a very appropriate distinction for the Commission and for him.

Senator HELMS. I take it you have had no conversation with Dr. Kissinger about any such meeting involving Kissinger and Oduber, is that correct?

Secretary SHULTZ. That is correct.

Senator HELMS. What is Dr. Kissinger's role?

Secretary SHULTZ. I am sure Dr. Kissinger, if he were to receive any communication of any kind, would simply pass that along. People all over the world are constantly wanting to communicate with Henry Kissinger, and so he receives all kinds of stuff, and where it is worth referring he tells us about it.

Senator HELMS. I am not talking about a communication Dr. Kissinger is supposed to have had. I am talking about a meeting Dr. Kissinger is supposed to have had with Oduber, and that is what I am asking you about. Do you know of any such meeting?

Secretary SHULTZ. I do not know of any such meeting.

Senator HELMS. Well, let us use the hypothetical.

Secretary SHULTZ. I am going to pass on hypothetical things.

Senator HELMS. Well, you maybe ought not to, Mr. Secretary. Would you as Secretary of State advise President Reagan under this or any circumstances to accept a negotiated solution that would impede the Nicaraguan freedom-fighters from attempting to oust the Communist regime?

Secretary SHULTZ. We are going to look at negotiated regional solutions to this problem and we will have to look at them all together, certainly. We have our ideas about how a country ought to be governed, what is best for us, what is best for people in that country.

At the same time, we are not in the position to go around the world telling every country how it should be governed and to do something about it.

Senator HELMS. Mr. Secretary, I admire you and I like you. But I do not think the answer was entirely responsive to my question.

Of course we want to look after our own best interests, we want to look after liberty in the world. But what I want to know is, are we going to pull back from the Nicaraguan freedom-fighters and say, tough luck, boys, we are no longer with you?

Secretary SHULTZ. We have no intention of abandoning people who are fighting for freedom, and I hope that we can sustain a position like that. It is very difficult, as the Boland-Zablocki vote suggests.

Senator HELMS. Mr. Chairman, my time is up.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Helms.

Senator Sarbanes.

Secretary SHULTZ. I am alarmed. I look over here and I see Senator Boschwitz. What is going on here, anyway?

The CHAIRMAN. We suddenly lost our majority.

Senator TSONGAS. One more naval exercise and we will get another one. [Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Sarbanes.

Senator SARBANES. Mr. Secretary. I would like to follow up on a couple of questions that Senator Helms asked, because this simple asking of the question places the matter on the record and leaves an allegation outstanding. Perhaps you can help to put it to rest.

The question asserted that the Kennedy-Khrushchev accords have a lot to do with what is now happening with Central America. Is that your perception or the perception of the Department?

Secretary SHULTZ. There was a relation of the content of the Kennedy-Khrushchev accords to development in the region potentially, because they treat with certain kinds of activities as they effect this region. So there is a potential relationship.

I do not want to get into a detailed discussion of the subject, first, in an open hearing, and second before I feel more thoroughly prepared than I do at this moment.

Senator SARBANES. You have no reaction to the assertion that the accords have a lot to do with what is happening, is that an accurate statement?

Secretary SHULTZ. That is Senator Helms' statement and I am going to stand on my statement.

Senator SARBANES. Your statement certainly does not concede his assertion, does it?

Secretary SHULTZ. Does not concede it. I am just leaving it to the side.

Senator SARBANES. Fine.

To turn another question of his in a different direction, can there be a negotiated settlement in Central America, in your view, which does not involve the overthrow of the regime in Nicaragua?

Secretary SHULTZ. Yes.

Senator SARBANES. Now, on the military exercises, it has been asserted by the President himself that these are done regularly, and I was interested in a prior instance in which an operation of this magnitude and dimension—maybe the admiral should respond to this—has been undertaken in that area, so that this could be seen as simply another routine exercise.

Admiral BIGLEY. There have been larger exercises in the region. In fact, this past winter during the month of February they had a large exercise in Panama called Kindle Liberty, which had a participation of about 11,000 U.S. ground troops; 6,000, of course, were the 193d Brigade, which is stationed in Panama. But the additions were brought in from the United States, conducted with the Panamanians in Panama.

We have also had for 24 years what we call Unitas, which is a Navy operation comprised of the U.S. Navy, a small task group of probably four to five ships and a submarine, which circumnavigates South America, participating in a sequential way with the various nations, up to eight or nine nations. That is going on right now and that comprises about 2,000 to 4,000 U.S. personnel in the conduct of one of those exercises.

Senator SARBANES. Of course, we have had exercises in Panama consistently over the years. For the record, I would be interested to know whether approval by the Congress of the Panama Canal treaties is an important factor in our ability to continue to conduct such exercises in Panama.

Admiral BIGLEY. At the present time, of course, we have the responsibility for the defense of the canal. When the canal is fully turned over, procedures for the perimeter defenses in Panama will have to be agreed upon between the Governments of Panama and the United States.